

**Citizens for a Fair Ferndale  
Candidate Forum  
Saturday, October 26, 2013  
12:30pm - 3:45pm  
Ferndale Public Library**

**Mayoral & Council Candidate Questionnaire**

**Name: David Coulter**

**Address: 555 Leroy**

**Website: davecoulter.com**

**Phone: 248-543-8984**

**E-mail address: dwcoulter@comcast.net**

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1. Why did you decide to run for Mayor/Council?

I enjoy working with so many talented people on issues important to our city. I'm proud of what we've accomplished in the past three years since I've been mayor, and I'm excited to continue the work that will help move Ferndale forward.

2. What is your vision for Ferndale? Over the next four years? Over the next ten years?

I see a vibrant community that is attractive to new residents, visitors and businesses. It's a city that embraces its diversity and its own sense of place to create something unique in metro Detroit. It's a city that doesn't let economic challenges define its future or success, but strives for new ways to offer the services and environment its residents rightly expect.

3. What two (2) things are you going to do that will bring your vision to reality?

1. Continue my focus on economic development, bringing jobs and businesses to our city that help increase revenues and put us on sound financial footing. My new Mayor's Business Council has helped increase non-residential investment 35%, investments that add to the long-term health of Ferndale.
2. A strong city has great neighborhoods, and I'll continue to work on ways to keep our strong. One way will be to implement the new ideas from my Blue Ribbon Commission on Parks, investing in improvements to our great parks without new revenue, not taxes.

4. Of all the issues facing Ferndale, what two (2) would you give top priority and why?

The budget will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future, so keeping expenses down while looking for new and innovative ways to provide services will continue to be a top priority. Most of our biggest projects have been done with little or no direct tax spending, like our new courthouse and police station, and that will continue because we can't let the budget be an excuse not to accomplish the things that will continue to make Ferndale stronger. Another priority, as noted above, will be to attract businesses - and the revenue and jobs they create - that will allow us to weather the worst of the economic realities.

5. Ferndale prides itself on an active citizenry.

A) What two (2) things would you tell someone who "just wanted to help", or who "just wanted to get involved"?

Just do it! There's a lot of formal groups to join, or better yet if you see something that needs doing, do it. Two years ago, Matt Nowaczok thought the city had a lot of litter, so instead of calling city hall and complaining he organized a city-wide clean-up day, Clean the Ferndale Up. That's the kind of spirit that makes Ferndale work, and the kind of hard work that we're always looking to support.

B) Please list and briefly describe three (3) resources (print, electronic, or otherwise) that residents who want to get involved should go to for ideas, background, facts or figures.

The city's new website, of course, lists the various boards and committees that are always looking for volunteers. That's a great place to start, but there's also a lot of events and activities planned that are posted on social media, etc., and attending those events and asking people is probably the best way to get a sense of the opportunities.

6. How do you see the council and other city leaders continuing and enhancing communication and collaboration with other organizations, municipalities and our school district? Please offer specific examples.

Working together to find common solutions to the issues in our city is critical, and I've found that personal relationships and trust are built over time. I talk regularly with other community leaders, and one thing I always promise them is that when an issue comes up they won't hear from me first through the newspaper. Productive relationships require honest communication, and I've worked hard to be a mayor that reaches out to include everyone's opinions and ideas when making decisions that affect everybody.

7. Please explain the importance of the city's Master Plan. Is it still relevant in this economic climate? When and how should it be reviewed?

A Master Plan is a blueprint for the future, and it's meant to be a plan that can change over time to reflect the city's changing priorities. Ours was updated recently and remains an important development tool.

8. The Ferndale City Council just passed a Good Neighbor Civility Resolution. How would you as Mayor/Council Member promote the message of civility in Ferndale?

I was happy to introduce and support the Civility Resolution, and I applaud the folks who's work led to its creation. I've tried to conduct council meetings that respect all voices, and I also try to be a person who listens more than he talks, making an honest effort to understand before I offer opinions or advice.